



# HOWARD COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

ELlicott City Historic District ■ LAWYERS HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT

3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

*Administered by the Department of Planning and Zoning*

VOICE 410-313-2350

FAX 410-313-3042

## March Agenda

Thursday, March 2, 2017; 7:00 p.m.

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The March meeting of the Historic Preservation Commission will be held at 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043. All cases are public meetings where any member of the public may offer testimony. Certain cases, such as requests for Certificates of Approval, are contested cases subject to the County Administrative Procedure Act. Information about participating in Commission cases is available at the Commission's website, [www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Planning-and-Zoning/Boards-and-Commissions/Historic-Preservation-Commission](http://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Planning-and-Zoning/Boards-and-Commissions/Historic-Preservation-Commission). Additional information may be obtained from the Department of Planning and Zoning by calling 410-313-2350. Requests for accommodations should be made at least three working days in advance of the meeting.

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This Agenda identifies the work proposed and includes comments and recommendations from DPZ Staff. The recommendations included here do not constitute a decision of the Commission.

### PLANS FOR APPROVAL

#### Consent Agenda

1. HPC-16-76c – 8069 Main Street, Ellicott City

#### Regular Agenda

2. HPC-17-15 – 8394 Main Street/Parking Lot F, Ellicott City
3. HPC-16-70c – 8247-8249 Main Street, Ellicott City
4. HPC-17-16 – 6130 Lawyers Hill Road, Elkrigde
5. HPC-17-17 – 3420 Sylvan Lane, Ellicott City
6. HPC-17-18 – 12171 Clarksville Pike, Clarksville
7. HPC-17-19 – 3956 Cooks Lane, Ellicott City
8. HPC-17-07 – 3614 Court House Drive, Ellicott City (continued from February)

## CONSENT AGENDA

### HPC-16-76c - 8069 Main Street, Ellicott City

Final tax credit approval.

Applicant: Len Berkowitz

**Background & Scope of Work:** This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT the building dates to 1890. The Applicant was pre-approved on October 6, 2016 to replace the apartment front door and replace the rear staircase, which were damaged by the July 30 flood. The Applicant has submitted documentation that \$9,468.75 was spent on eligible, pre-approved work. The Applicant seeks \$2,367.19 in final tax credits.

**Staff Comments:** The invoices and cancelled checks add up to the requested amount and the work complies with that pre-approved.

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends Approval as submitted.

## REGULAR AGENDA

### **HPC-17-15 – 8394 Main Street/Parking Lot F, Ellicott City**

Certificate of Approval for landscape alterations.

Applicant: David Carney

**Background & Scope of Work:** This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District, between the Thomas Isaac Log Cabin and The Wine Bin. The Applicant, in conjunction with the Department of Recreation and Parks, proposes to plant a sassafras tree and install three boulders in the landscape bed between Parking Lot F, the Thomas Isaac Log Cabin (8394 Main Street) and the Wine Bin (8390 Main Street), as shown in Figure 1 below. The sassafras tree will be located closer to Parking Lot F, approximately where the green star is shown in Figure 1. Recreation and Parks has identified a flowering dogwood as the second choice tree. The boulders will be approximately located where the orange star is shown, in order to prevent pedestrian traffic through the garden. The boulders will be a cluster of three stones. One stone will be 5 feet wide by 3 feet tall and two will be 3 feet wide by 2 feet tall. These will be native stones excavated from Blandair Park.



Figure 1 - Location of garden

**Staff Comments:** Chapter 9.B (page 65) of the Guidelines states, “The Ellicott City 225<sup>th</sup> Birthday Committee has selected three indigenous plants, serviceberry, pepper bush and purple sage, to commemorate the 225<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the town’s founding.” Staff finds the proposed sassafras tree is not an appropriate choice for that location. The roots sucker and the tree can develop multiple stems or

new trees. Staff inquired if Recreation and Parks would be agreeable to planting a serviceberry, redbud or flowering dogwood, which are smaller trees that would better fit the space.

Chapter 9.D recommends, “construct new site features using materials compatible with the setting and with nearby historic structures, particularly for features visible from a public way.” The proposed boulders are compatible with nearby structures and features. Native stone is a common sight in Ellicott City and is seen throughout Main Street. The use of natural boulders in a landscape setting is appropriate.

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends Approval of planting a flowering dogwood, which was suggested by Staff and was the Applicant’s second choice. Staff recommends Approval of installing the three stone boulders.

#### **HPC-16-70c – 8247-8249 Main Street, Ellicott City**

Final tax credit approval.

Applicant: Pauline Jacobs

**Background & Scope of Work:** These properties are located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT the buildings dates to 1920. The Applicant was pre-approved on September 15, 2016 and October 6, 2016 for the following work:

- 1) Repair and replace brickwork under the front first floor windows at both buildings.
- 2) Replace the front door at both buildings with a full lite wood door to match the existing doors that were damaged in the flood. The doors will be painted an orange/red to match the existing color.
- 3) The porch will be installed smaller to only accommodate emergency egress from the apartments in the building. The roof on the existing porch will not be added back on.

The Applicant has submitted documentation that \$18,406.80 was spent on work. The Applicant seeks \$4,601.70 in final tax credits.

**Staff Comments:** The January 3 invoice from Decks Unlimited states that a new solid white vinyl soffit was installed below the porch ceiling. The vinyl soffit was added to the area the porch roof previously tied into. There is also a September 22 invoice that states that siding on the portion of the house by the staircase was replaced with new gray vinyl siding. Vinyl is not a material that is typically approved for use in the Historic District; however the existing siding on the rear of the building is aluminum, which does not appear to be readily available anymore.

**Staff Recommendation:** If the Commission determines the repairs comply with the pre-approval, then Staff recommends approval as submitted.

#### **HPC-17-16 - 6130 Lawyers Hill Road, Elkridge**

Application for Certificate of Approval for exterior alterations.

Applicant: Daniel and Lisa Roth

**Background & Scope of Work:** This property is located in the Lawyers Hill Historic District. According to SDAT the building dates to 1890. The Applicant proposes to construct a wrap-around porch/deck on the side of the house, connecting a previously approved rear deck with the existing front entry porch, which

was approved to be rebuilt. The Applicant has submitted a photograph from 1991 that shows a previously existing deck similar to the current proposal.



Figure 2 - Photograph from 1991



Figure 3 - House condition in 2014

In June 2016, approval was given to rebuild the existing front porch and construct the rear deck:

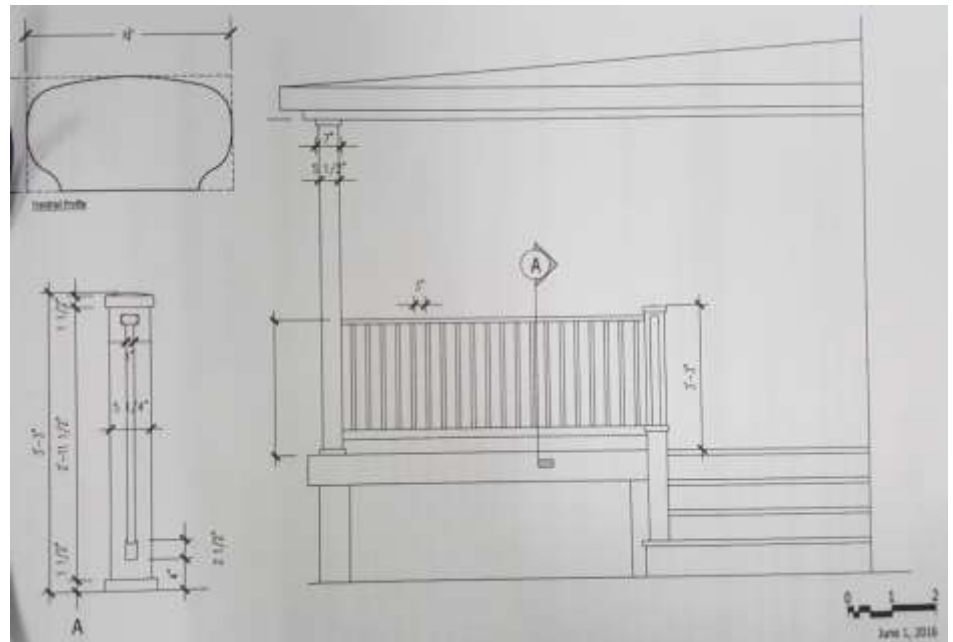
- 1) Rebuild the side porch. The existing porch will need to be completely removed and rebuilt. The application states, "the plan includes installing primed wood decking that is period correct and



paint a grey color. All trim boards, posts, and hand-rails will be painted the same off-white color to match the windows and doors.”

- 2) Add a 16x20 foot deck off the rear of the house. All decking and railing to match the side porch.

The original design for the porch included round columns, but after Staff indicated that was not an historically appropriate design, the Applicant revised the porch columns and railings to be square, as shown in the approved design in Figure 4. The porch railings and columns that were constructed do not match this design. The approved end railing has an open design and the columns have a square base and capital.



**Figure 4 - Approved plans for rebuilding front porch**

The current proposal plans to connect these two previously approved items with a side porch. For clarity in this proposal the original porch will be referred to as the front porch, the deck off of the kitchen will be referred to as the rear deck and the proposed connecting porch will be referred to as the side deck.

The decking will be painted porch grey, which was previously approved for the main entry porch and the wooden rails, trim boards and posts/columns will be painted off-white to match the house trim. The decking will be painted gray.

Staff inquired about the height of the deck and the Applicant provided the following information: “From the highest point at the rear of the house, the deck boards will be 8 feet off the ground. In the front on either side of the stairs, the deck boards will be 6 feet off the ground. In the front, to the left of the front porch, the deck boards will be 4 feet off the ground. On the right side of the stairs leading to the front porch, the deck boards will be 3 feet off the ground.”

The Applicant stated via email that the “support posts under the deck will be 2 inch steel posts/helical piles that will be trimmed out with 1" by 6" wood trim boards that will be painted the same medium brown color as the foundation of the house. We have no plans to close in the under part of the deck or run lattice.”

The Applicant also stated that “the rear stairs will be built identical to the front porch stairs in style. There will be a stair tread and a riser and will



**Figure 5 - Proposed wood railing**

have hand rails on both sides. It will not be an open deck stair and will be finished the same as front porch.”

Staff conducted a site visit on Thursday, February 16, 2016 and found the majority of the porch, with the exception of the posts/footers, had already been constructed, as shown in Figures 6 through 10.



Figure 6 - Existing conditions on February 16, 2017



Figure 7 -Existing conditions on February 16, 2017



Figure 8 - Existing conditions on February 16, 2017

**Staff Comments:** The County Architectural Historian does not think a wrap-around porch existed historically on this house and that the 1991 photograph is a modern alteration. Staff finds that adding a wrap-around deck presents some difficulties with historic restoration. The Applicant proposes to paint the decking gray, which is part of the original approval and is historically correct treatment for porch floors. However, porch floors are covered and the current proposal is for open air decking, which would not typically be painted and would not weather well. Chapter 6.F of the Guidelines state, “porches are



generally of frame construction with painted wood. Unpainted wood is not common in the Historic District.” As the Guidelines point out, unpainted wood is not common, but painted wood for a deck is also not a common treatment either. Chapter 6.F recommends, “maintain and repair porches, including flooring, railings, columns, supports, ornamentation and roofing, that are original or appropriate to the building’s development and style.” Staff is concerned about the modern change in appearance to the home with the addition of this deck that was most likely not a historic feature, nor is it appropriate to the building’s style as it will greatly alter the side appearance of the building, one of the most visible sides of the building from public view. Staff asked the Applicant to provide a side elevation of the house showing the proposed deck, but did not receive such a plan.

The above comments were written prior to discovering that the side deck was already constructed. Now that the deck is constructed, Staff finds the number of vertical railings is visually overwhelming. While the vertical railings may have been appropriate for the front porch and rear deck, it is clear that it is not an appropriate design for the entire porch/deck. The railings interrupt the line of sight with the side windows. This issue could have been cleared up if a side elevation had been submitted and if the deck had not been constructed without approval.

Chapter 7 of the Guidelines provides recommendations for new construction, including porches. Chapter 7.A recommends, “attach additions to the side or rear of a historic building. Design and place additions to avoid damaging or obscuring key architectural features of the historic building” and “design additions to be subordinate to the historic building in size, height, scale and detail and to allow the form of the original structure to be seen. Distinguish an addition from the original structure by using vertical trim or a setback or offset between the old section and the new.” The railings obscure the windows, which are key architectural features of this building and do not allow the form of the original structure to be seen. In the original application the Applicant proposed to shorten a side window for interior space planning, which the Commission did not approve. The most appropriate place for this deck is the rear of the building, which was approved. The side deck also connects to the front porch, a historic feature of this building, and does not distinguish between the new construction, creating a false sense of history. The railings are not subordinate to the building in terms of detail and have become one of the most prominent features on the side façade, which is the largest visual expanse of this building.



Figure 9- Existing conditions on February 16, 2017

The Applicant proposes to install a staircase on the new side deck, where the gap in the railing currently is, as show in in Figure 9. Staff finds this is not an appropriate location as it will draw more attention to the side deck and is too narrow in design. The deck drawing indicates that the stairs will run sideways off of the side deck. This is a very modern treatment for stairs and Staff finds the most appropriate location for secondary egress from the deck would be on the farther side of the rear deck, as originally approved.

The Lawyers Hill Historic District Design Guidelines are very clear that this work required a Certificate of Approval before it was constructed. Appendix A (page 53) contains a summary of work requiring approval and 'Porch or deck addition' is identified as needing approval.



**Figure 10 - Existing conditions on February 16, 2017**

As mentioned above, the Applicant stated that the steel posts will be trimmed out with 1x6 wood boards that will be painted the same medium brown color as the foundation of the house. Chapter 7 of the Guidelines recommend, “use details to provide a visual link between old and new by continuing a line of trim, or using similar forms in rooflines or other elements.” The posts are highly visible due to the height of the deck. If the Commission approves the retroactive application for construction, Staff finds the posts should match the existing brick posts found on the front porch as this deck is highly visible and the materials used should be consistent. See Figure 7.

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends denial of the side deck. Staff recommends the end posts on the front porch be replaced per the original approved design and the columns completed per the original approved design. Staff recommends the staircase be added to the rear deck as originally approved.



### **HPC-17-17 – 3420 Sylvan Lane, Ellicott City**

Application for Certificate of Approval for new construction.

Applicant: Robert Z. Hollenbeck

**Background & Scope of Work:** This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District and dates to approximately 1890. The Applicant proposes to construct a bank barn behind the main historic house, cut into an existing slope. The application states, “the topography of the existing slope leaves approximately nine feet from driveway level to where the slope plateaus at the top, and has relatively little fall from side to side. By cutting into the slope, the scale of the structure is diminished, as only a single story will generally be visible from three sides once constructed.”

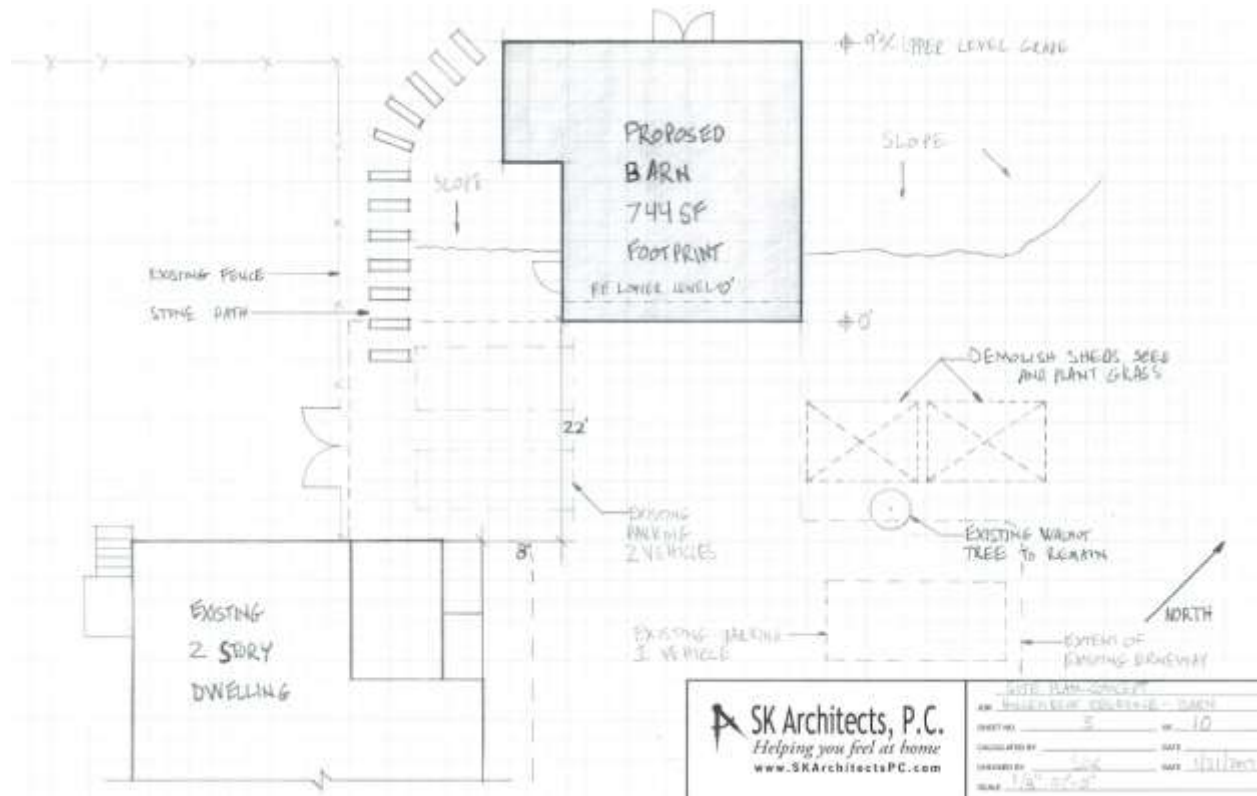


Figure 11 - Proposed location of new barn

The Applicant also seeks approval for a three rail wood fence that was constructed prior to their ownership of the home. The fence is a three rail split rail fence that is four feet high with posts 8 foot on center. Staff did not see approvals in the file for these items.



Figure 12 - Existing fence

The proposed barn elements and materials are outlined below:

Foundation: The walls of the lower level foundation will be clad in a custom gray/brown/tan stone blend from quarried stone. The stone will be laid in a coursed ashlar pattern with light sand color mortar. The stone will be 4 to 6 inches thick and approximately 8 to 18 inches long.

Natural stone steps: Install 13 large stone slabs, approximately 3 to 4 feet in length and at least 6 inches in height, and varying in depth from 12 to 24 inches, into the existing hillside to create a stone pathway, as shown on the site plan.

Siding: The upper level of the barn will be constructed with board and batten siding using 1x12 rough sawn pine that is left to patina to a natural silver/gray. The battens will be 1x3 rough sawn pine, also left to naturally weather. The application states that “board and batten siding was selected to ensure that the structure does not resemble the home, so that it is subservient both in scale and material to the principal structure. Additionally, the board and batten is intended to echo some of the older accessory garage and barn structures located throughout the Historic District.”

Roof and Gutters: The Applicant proposes to install a 16 inch wide Pac-Clad standing seam metal roof in either Weathered Zinc (option 1) or Colonial Red (option 2). The barn will have half round gutters and matching downspouts in a galvanized metal color in order to blend in with the natural wood siding which will weather to a silver/gray color. The Applicant also seeks approval to install an asphalt shingle roof if the standing seam metal roof is too expensive. The proposed asphalt shingle roof would be Tamko Heritage asphalt shingle in the color Old English Pewter, a light gray color. A metal woodstove chimney will extrude from the roof.

Lighting: Lighting fixtures will be added at entry doors and will be a black gooseneck style light.

Windows: The proposed windows will be Pella 2 over 2 double hung aluminum clad wood windows in the color white. The windows will have a 1x4 natural unpainted pine trim to match the board and batten siding.

Exterior doors, windows and other features by elevation:

East Elevation (labeled South elevation on submission) - Overhead garage sectional doors on the lower level will be faux carriage house garage doors built out of a composite material that will be painted Sherwin Williams Roycroft Copper Red with black hardware. The upper level barn style doors will be a wood custom built door 2 lite over 1 panel with v-groove detail in the panel. There will be three windows visible from this elevation. This side of the building will also have a 4x12 beam installed to resemble a barn hay carrier. A pulley will be affixed to the beam and will either be weathered steel or painted black. This item will not be functional.



Figure 14 - East Elevation



Figure 13 - South Elevation

South elevation (labeled West elevation on submission) – The proposed door on the lower level will be a half lite (no muntin pattern) over 1 v-groove panel wood door. Three windows will be visible on this side of the building. There will be one light on this side of the building, to the right of the door.



West Elevation (labeled North elevation on submission) – There will be one pair of doors on this elevation, which are salvaged doors with 6 lights over 1 'x' panel. The doors will be painted Sherwin Williams Roycroft Copper Red with black hardware. There are two windows visible on this elevation. There will be one light on this side of the building, over the paired door.

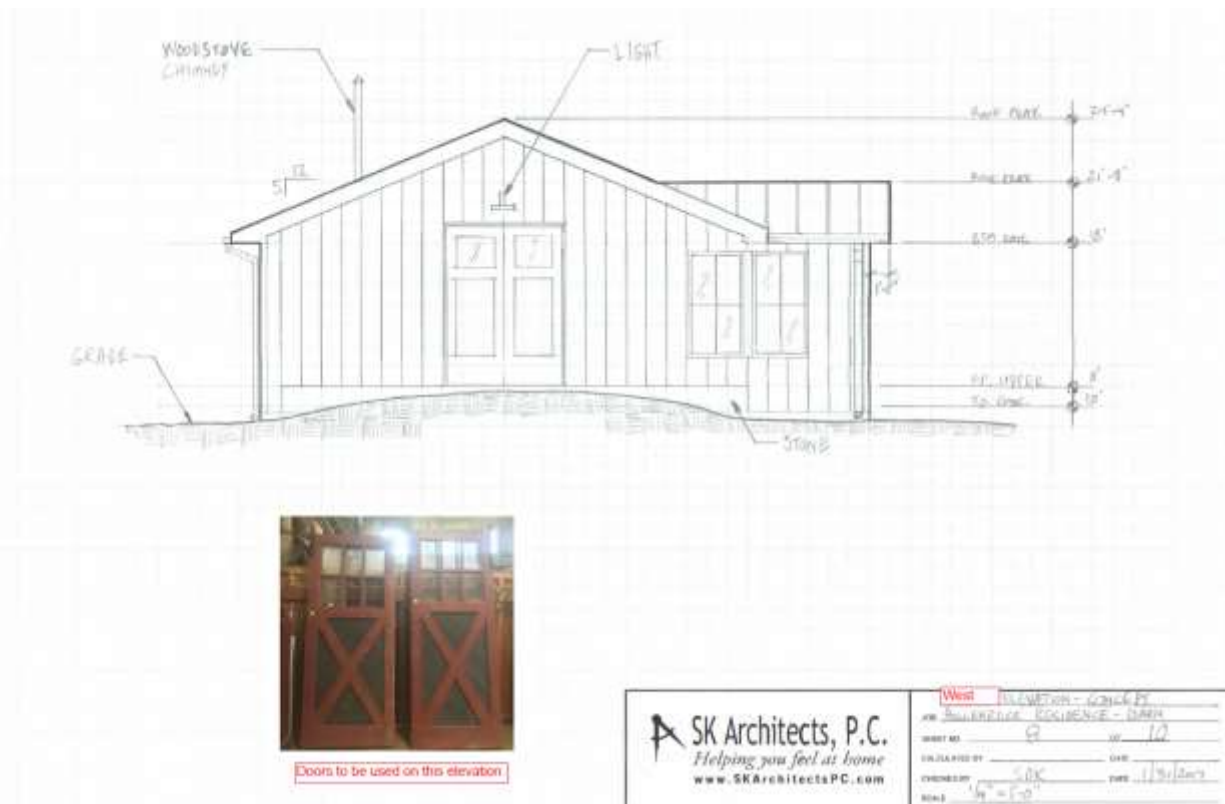


Figure 15 - West Elevation

North elevation (labeled East elevation on submission) – There are no doors on this elevation. There are two windows, one on the upper level and one on the lower level, visible on this side of the building.

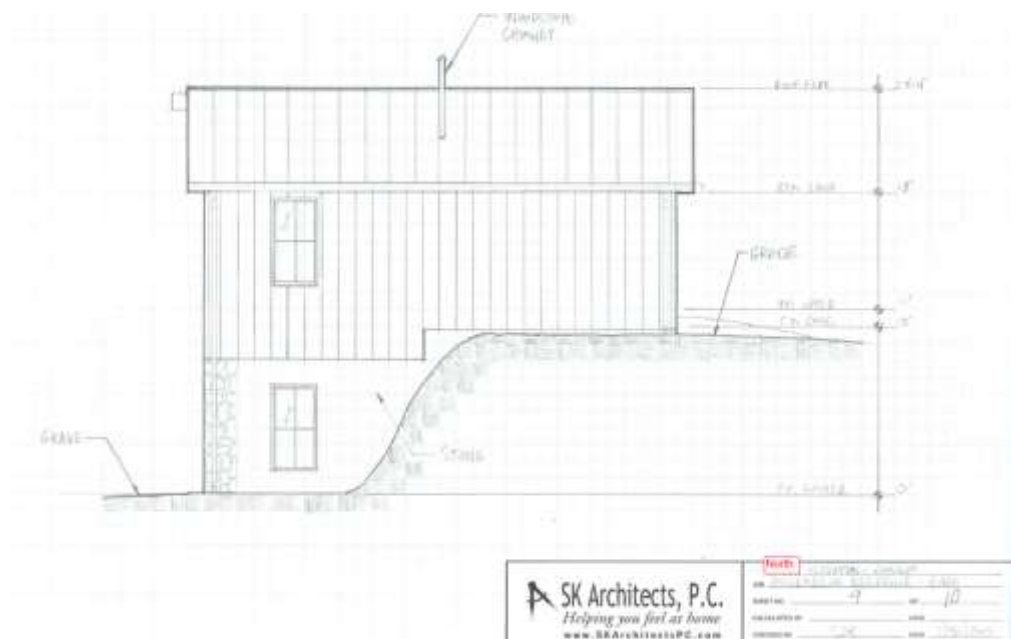


Figure 16 - North Elevation

**Staff Comments:** The application complies with Chapter 7 recommendations for ‘New Construction: Additions, Porches and Outbuildings.’ The location of the barn complies with Chapter 7.C recommendations (page 55), “if allowed by the size and shape of the property, place new outbuildings to the side or rear of the main building, separated from the main building by a substantial setback.” The new barn will be located 22 feet behind the main house, set to the side and built into the hillside. The Guidelines (page 55) also recommend, “do not place a new outbuilding where it blocks or obscures views of a historic building.” The barn will not be located directly behind the historic house, but to the rear on the north east edge.

The barn was designed to look like historic barns found in Ellicott City. This was explained in the application, as examples of other outbuildings and barns in the historic district were provided. The design complies with Chapter 7.C recommendations, “design outbuildings visible from a public way to be compatible in scale, form and detailing with historic structures and outbuildings in the neighborhood.” This barn will not be visible from the public right of way, although it still complies with the recommendation. The barn will be built into the hillside, taking advantage of the natural topography. As a result, the barn will appear to be a one story structure on most sides, which complies with Chapter 7.C recommendations, “design outbuildings to be subordinate in size and detail to principal buildings in the immediate vicinity.”

Chapter 7.C recommends, “use materials compatible with the main building on the lot or with historic outbuildings in the immediate neighborhood.” The barn will have wood board and batten siding, which will complement the German lap wood siding on the historic house. The application complies with Chapter 7.A recommendations, “on any building, use exterior materials and colors similar to or compatible with the texture and color of those on the existing building.” The board and batten will be compatible with the historic house, but is more appropriate for the architectural style of the proposed barn. A natural stone will be used to veneer the foundation and it is compatible in color and scale with stone used on other buildings in Ellicott City. The proposed windows are an aluminum clad wood and are appropriate as they will not be visible from a public way, are for new construction, but will still be made of wood and match the style of the windows on the historic house.

The proposed standing seam metal roof or backup proposed asphalt shingle roof complies with Chapter 7.A (page 53) recommendations, “roofing material may be similar to historic roofing material on the existing building or may be an unobtrusive modern material such as asphalt shingles. Asphalt shingles should be flat and uniform in color and texture.” The historic house has an asphalt shingle roof, so there are no historic roofing materials on the site. Staff recommends the Applicant consider using the secondary standing seam metal roof color choice, the colonial red. While the weathered zinc color is appropriate, the red will provide more contrast as the natural wood begins to age and keeps the entire building from becoming a monochromatic silver gray. The red will also complement the proposed red for the doors and tie that color scheme into the building.

The fence complies with Chapter 9.D (page 69 and 70), which states, “split rail or post and rail fences are more appropriate in less densely developed areas such as upper Church Road, Sylvan Lane and Park Drive” and “install open fencing, generally not more than five feet high, of wood or dark metal.”

**Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends Approval as submitted and retroactive approval of the fence.

**HPC-17-18 – 12171 Clarksville Pike, Clarksville**

Advisory Comments for site development plan for a site containing a historic structure.

Applicant: Steve Breeden

**Background & Scope of Work:** This property is not located in a local historic district, nor is it listed on the Historic Sites Inventory. However, the structure is historic and dates to approximately 1920. This application is for Advisory Comments for the site development plan of the property, which includes the demolition of the historic house. The house is located in Clarksville, along Clarksville Pike. The entire property, including the River Hill Garden Center, consists of 6.3 acres and is zoned B-1 and falls under the purview of the Clarksville Pike Streetscape Plan and Design Guidelines and the Design Advisory Panel.



Figure 17 - Front of historic house



Figure 18 - Side of historic house



Figure 19 - Side of historic house



### Architectural Historian Comments:

The Dr. Herbert & Grace Zepp House (12171 Clarksville Pike) is a c. 1920s bungalow that has had wholesale replacement of materials on the exterior c. 2007, according to the owner. This includes siding, windows, doors, foundation stone veneer, and porch decking and ceiling. The front door was apparently originally in the end bay and was moved to the center as part of these renovations. There is evidence on the interior that there was also an at-grade side door to the exterior, which no longer exists. Nevertheless, the house retains the original form of a bungalow, with the roof sweeping out over the large front porch, and thus would be considered a contributing structure to a historic district, though such a district does not, and could not, exist here. On the interior there has not only been significant replacement of original fabric, but major alterations of spaces through the reconfiguring of walls and the replacement and relocation of the stairway. There are several interior features that survive, most significantly the fireplace with flanking built-in bookcases. This architectural device was very popular with higher-end bungalows but is rarely seen in Howard County. The oak floor with walnut inlay also survives in this room, in apparently good condition, while throughout the second story the original flooring survives, but is in serious need of refinishing. While the historic integrity has been seriously compromised, the house is still worthy of being inventoried, which would then qualify it for tax credits.

**Staff Comments:** The historic structure proposed for demolition is shown in the Clarksville Pike Design Guidelines on page 7 as an example of existing buildings that contribute to the character of the Clarksville Pike Corridor's sense of place. The River Hill Garden Center, of which this building is part of, is listed in the Guidelines under 'Prominent Buildings and Landmarks'. Page 22 of the Guidelines references materials and elements, and this building is again used as an example with its front porch.

One of the design principals referenced in the Guidelines is, "Green....Incorporate sustainable elements." While the Guidelines focus on other environmental sustainable methods, the adaptive reuse of existing, historic buildings is one of the most sustainable practices. This building has been renovated and is in good condition. The building is constructed out of a variety of materials such as HardiePlank siding, Trex decking, and wood interior flooring which are materials that would be put into the landfill if the building is demolished.

The existing historic house directly fronts Clarksville Pike and complies with the Clarksville Pike Guidelines, which recommend, "buildings should front onto Clarksville Pike, buildings should be set close to the street and primary building entrances should be oriented to the street." The existing building complies with these Guidelines, while the proposed new structure at this location does not, as shown in Figure 20.

The property is located within Area 3 along Clarksville Pike, as referenced in the Clarksville Pike Guidelines. The Guidelines (page 44) for Area 3 state, "street trees will be informally clustered to reflect the character of the surrounding agricultural landscape, in contrast to the uniform, evenly-spaced street trees further south near the commercial core...It is important that proposed landscape elements respect

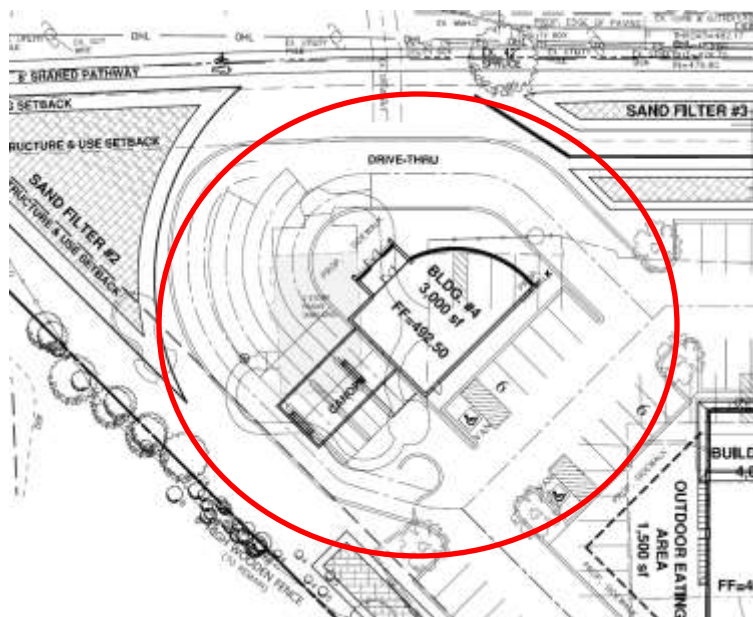


Figure 20 - Proposed site plan showing demolition of historic house and construction of new building

special features such as the “H” tree, two trees uniquely grafted as one located across from the River Hill Garden Center, and the prominent viewsheds of the agricultural landscape that runs adjacent to this portion of Clarksville Pike.” The historic house, which is a bungalow, is part of that agricultural landscape. The house is setback from the street with a yard and is nestled next to a grove of mature trees. The demolition of this house and its environmental setting will negatively affect the streetscape.



**Staff Recommendation:** Staff recommends the historic structure be retained and not demolished.

**HPC-17-19 – 3956 Cooks Lane, Ellicott City, HO-859**

Advisory Comments for site development plan with historic structure HO-859.

Applicant: David Woessner

**Background & Scope of Work:** This property is not located in a historic district, but contains a historic house and is listed on the Historic Sites Inventory as HO-859, the Pue-Fulton Farm. According to the Historic Sites Inventory, the house dates to approximately 1905. The property is zoned CEF-R, consists of 10.0 acres and will contain 55 townhouses. The historic main house was constructed in the foursquare style. The main house and the smokehouse will be retained. A warehouse, ranch house and florist shop/building on the site will be demolished.



The site plan states that the historic building will be the central focus and will include the preservation of the environmental setting around the historic house and smoke house. There will be at least an 80 foot setback on the front and sides of the house to the curb. The back of the house has a 30 foot setback. Townhouse lots 8 through 18 will be located along the street fronting the historic house and will have rear loaded garages accessed from an alley. An uninterrupted sidewalk will be located in front of these townhouses, but the sidewalk will directly abut the street, there will not be a grass buffer between the street and sidewalk. Parallel parking will be permitted on-street in front of these units.

This site is located in the Tiber Hudson watershed. This plan has already been submitted to the Planning Board, Design Advisory Panel and the Zoning Board.



There has not yet been any restoration to the historic house and that work will not take place until approximately 6 years from now, when the project is able to proceed due the school capacity issue. Architectural plans and renderings are also not available for the townhouses yet also due to the timing issue before the development can proceed.

**Staff Comments:** The site plan shows a pervious sidewalk surrounding and adjacent to the historic house. This will need to be carefully constructed with protections for the historic house in place to keep water away from the foundation of the house. Typically water would be directed away from the foundation of the house and not absorbed in such close proximity.

Townhouses lots 19 through 31 will have front loading garages, and as such, have driveway curb cuts directly onto the loop road around the historic house. This results in an interrupted sidewalk with narrow strips of land between driveways. Lots 32 through 45 are located behind the historic house. These townhouses also have front loading garages, but with the exception of lots 36 and 37, tend to have larger strips of land between the driveways. From a design and maintenance perspective, these narrow strips of land between driveways should be planned out carefully and alternative materials and planting techniques, such as xeriscaping, should be looked into.



Townhouse lots 4 through 7 are turned to face the side of Lot 3. If possible, Staff recommends these units be turned and lined up next to lots 1 through 3. This would present a more typical street pattern.

Overall this plan complies with Section 16.118 of the subdivision regulations for the protection of historic resources. The historic house, smokehouse and existing trees will be retained on one lot, as recommended by Section 16.118, "historic buildings, structures and landscape features which are integral to the historic setting should be located on a single lot of suitable size to ensure protection of the historic structure and setting." The historic house will front the main loop road and the townhouses directly across from it will face the historic house. This complies with Section 16.118(b)(4), "the new subdivision road should be sited so that the lot layout does not intrude on the historic resources. The road should be oriented so that views of the historic property from the public road are of its primary façade."

**HPC-17-07 – 3614 Court House Drive, Ellicott City (continued from February)**

Advisory Comments for site development plan in Ellicott City Historic District.

Applicant: David Warshaw, Court Hill LLC

**Background & Scope of Work:** This property is located in the Ellicott City Historic District. According to SDAT the building, which is an apartment complex, dates to 1966. The apartment complex will remain and 8 new lots for townhouses will be created. The application states, "the subject property was previously developed in conjunction with SDP-66-11. This site development plan includes the existing building and parking area, which were constructed in the late 1960s. This SDP also included additional buildings, drive and parking areas which were not constructed. However, the clearing and grading was performed and the field run topographic survey is representative of that plan." The application goes on to explain, "the project is designed to avoid existing steep slopes which were previously created and to utilize the resulting level area. As a result of WP-16-067 and ECP-16-029, the plan was modified to eliminate units and to avoid the stream buffer." The current plan is a new SDP that requires Advisory Comments from the Commission before the developer can submit to the plans to the Department of Planning and Zoning for review.

Regarding trees, the application states that the trees in the level area are of minimal size and the vegetative resources within steep slopes and stream buffer are to remain. The application states that "the single specimen tree will remain" and that "all trees 12 inches and greater will be located and addressed."

There is one proposed retaining wall, which varies in height from 3 feet to 9 feet. The Applicant proposes to construct an interlocking block geo-grid wall and the block will be gray. The application states that "the wall will not be visible from the public right-of-way or adjacent properties. Fences will be specified in accordance with those found suitable for the historic district."



Figure 21 - Site plan overlaid on aerial of site

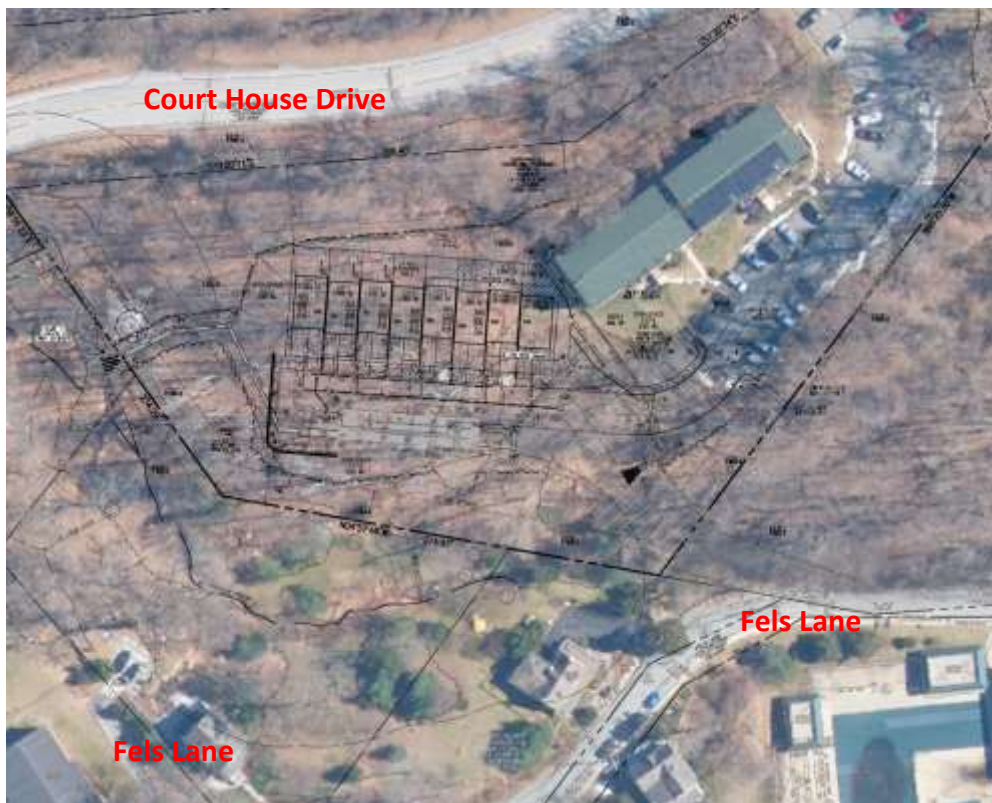


Figure 22 - Aerial of site



**Figure 23 - Larger aerial of site**

**Staff Comments:** At this time the Commission is only providing Advisory Comments on the site development plan and advice for future applications that must come before the Commission for the Certificate of Approvals required to proceed with construction.

#### Site Plan

This site is located above historic Fels Lane and below Court House Drive. The new townhouses will be constructed next to the existing apartment complex. Renderings of the proposed townhouses are not yet available. The historic houses on Fels Lane are visible from this site and there is a steep slope separating the two areas.

Chapter 8.C of the Guidelines on Siting New Buildings states, “new buildings should respect historic development patterns. In most cases, this will mean siting new building in a similar manner to neighboring buildings. Within the constraints of the particular building lot, new buildings should maintain setbacks from street and other buildings consistent with those of nearby historic buildings and should avoid blocking important views of Ellicott City and its terrain.” This site is accessed off of Court House Drive, but does not front the street, so there are no setbacks to maintain from the perspective of the Guidelines’ recommendation. However the new townhouses will share a similar orientation as the apartments to the parking area that will be constructed in front of the homes.

Chapter 8.C recommends, “whenever practical and consistent with neighboring buildings, orient new buildings with the front door and primary façade facing the street. This is a consistent pattern through most of Ellicott City, but may not work in some locations due to the hilly terrain, winding street and irregular lot patterns.” The proposed townhouses will face the same direction as the existing apartment complex, which looks toward Fels Lane. The existing building does not face Court House Drive, nor will



the new construction. The grade change from Court House Drive to the location of the existing building and proposed buildings would make facing Court House Drive difficult. The townhouses will be located next to the existing apartment complex, and the buildings will form a wide “V” shape. There is a concrete walkway in front of the townhouses which extends to the parking area for the apartment complex, but does not connect to an existing sidewalk in front of the apartments. The sidewalk should be extended in front of the apartments in order to create a visual connection to the existing community.

The site plan shows a garage for each townhouse. These garages will most likely be located on the front of the building, as there does not appear to be any access provided on the rear. Staff recommends the Applicant consider a rear loading garage as front loading garages are not common in the District. Chapter 7.C states, “new garages and sheds should follow the historic pattern of being detached from the main building and if practical, located in a side or rear yard.”

### Trees

A future application for a Certificate of Approval is required for the removal of any trees 12 inches or greater at diameter breast height. That application should contain a plan that identifies all of these trees. The trees should be located and numbered on a plan. A corresponding chart should indicate the species and size of each tree (12 inches or greater) and whether or not the tree is going to be removed or remain in place. Additionally, a photograph of each tree identified on this plan should be provided. The photographs or chart should address the condition of each identified tree. This information should be provided by a certified arborist or a qualified forest stand delineator.

### Retaining Walls and Fences

The application states that the proposed retaining wall is an interlocking block geo-grid wall in the color gray, to be similar to granite. Chapter 9.D states, “retaining walls of granite, brick or timber may be appropriate, depending on the context. Concrete walls can be used in locations with very little visibility. New granite walls are expensive, but retaining walls faced with granite or with a surface treatment that resembles Ellicott City’s typical stonework can be appropriate in visible locations.” The block geo-grid material is not appropriate for use in the Historic District, as the Commission has previously ruled in a similar proposal. Staff recommends the retaining wall be faced with an appropriate historic style stone to match the stone found in Ellicott City. Chapter 9.D of the Guidelines provides advice for suitable fences in the District, but typically black metal open fences are most appropriate. An application for Certificate of Approval for the retaining wall and fencing must be submitted to the Commission before any work takes place.

### Building Materials and Elevations

Staff recommends the Applicant consider applying for Pre-Application Advice on the buildings to be constructed once renderings are available. The Commission can then provide feedback on whether or not the architectural designs are appropriate for the Historic District. This will make the application for the Certificate of Approval go smoother as the Commission can review the designs before they are finalized. At the time of the application for the Certificate of Approval, the Commission will need detailed elevations for each individual townhouse. Each application should contain specification sheets for all exterior materials, such as roofing, siding, color schemes, exterior lights, hardscaping, etc.

Chapter 8 provides guidance for the new construction of principal structures in the Historic District and states, “The County Code requires the Historic Preservation Commission to be lenient in its evaluation of new buildings ‘except where such plans would seriously impair the historic or architectural value of surrounding structures or the surrounding area’...New buildings need not imitate historic forms, but they must respect and be compatible with neighboring historic buildings.” The existing apartment complex is constructed out of brick and is not a historic structure. However, any future buildings should

be constructed to complement the existing building in order to create a cohesive development. Staff recommends that the new construction limit the number of materials and details on the exterior. For example, a townhouse should not have a brick first floor and then lap siding on remaining floors. However, a townhouse could have a brick or stone foundation line and then siding on the rest of the building, which is a more historically and architecturally appropriate style of construction. In lieu of having renderings to provide feedback on, Staff recommends the Applicant research historic rowhomes found in Ellicott City and Oella for examples on appropriate style, material, massing and proportions. Chapter 8.B explains, “compatibility with neighboring buildings in terms of form, proportion, scale and siting is the highest priority. If these are resolved, details such as colors, material or window design can be more easily dealt with. Since the majority of Ellicott City’s historic structures are simple, straightforward and unassuming, simplicity in design is important for any new construction.” The existing building is a very simple brick building.

There are some important recommendations to consider when designing the new structures for this site. Chapter 8.B recommends, “design new buildings to be compatible with neighboring buildings in bulk, ratio of height to width, and the arrangement of door and window openings.” In this case the door and window openings on the existing building are too modern and not appropriate, as it was constructed prior to the creation of the Historic District. Chapter 8.B recommends, “place sliding glass doors, large bay windows and similar features on the side or rear of a new building, not on a primary façade.” The windows on the existing building are irregularly sized and there are balconies and sliding glass doors on the front of the building. Chapter 8.B also recommends, “Design new buildings so that the floor to ceiling height and the heights of cornices and eaves are similar to or blend with nearby buildings. Generally, there should not be more than a 10 percent difference in height between a new building and neighboring buildings if the neighboring buildings are similar in height.” This Guideline is very important as the new construction should not tower over the existing building. Staff recommends the Applicant thoroughly read Chapter 8 before designing the new structures as there are other important guidelines on details and materials.

Finally, in light of the severity of the July 30<sup>th</sup> flood, Staff recommends thorough review of CB 80-2016 that amends the Howard County Code to prohibit the issuance of waivers or variances to floodplain, wetland, stream, or steep slope regulations for properties located in the Tiber Branch Watershed to determine whether this development will face any issues.

\*Chapter and page references are from the Ellicott City or Lawyers Hill Historic District Design Guidelines.

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Beth Burgess  
Executive Secretary

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Samantha Holmes  
Staff, Historic Preservation Commission